

Connection

by ZS Fan

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Summary: In Ikebukuro, everything is connected. When two of the city's most prominent figures get together, the change in their relationship cascades across the people of the city - even as the two men deal with issues of their own. Izuo and Shizaya

Connection

¶

**In an apartment in
Shinjuku**

¶

"Namie."

"¶."

"Namieeeee."

A phenomenon was occurring.

Orihara Izaya was pouting.

The man who was always smiling or smirking had his lips downturned.

The information broker was laid out on his desk, his head on his arms and pouting like a petulant child.

And Yagiri Namie wanted no part of that.

"Namieeeee¶.!"

Seiji. Seiji Seiji Seiji ah Seijiâ€¡!

Namie thought dreamily, thinking of her beloved brother â€"

"Why won't Shizu-chan fuck me?"

And promptly choked on thin air, giving the black haired man an incredulous look.

"Excuse me?!"

"Why won't Heiwajima Shizuo fuck me?"

Izaya said again, using his lover's full name as he turned his head and murmured almost distractedly.

"I don't know, and I don't care."

Namie said derisively and turned away, about to go back to thoughts of Seiji â€"

But Izaya had to ruin it as usual.

"Why can I fuck Shizu-chan, but I can't get fucked by Shizu-chan? It doesn't make sense."

"Too much information, information broker." Namie scowled.

But Izaya didn't even smirk at her discomfort. He was still in a depressed position, his usually mischievous eyes unusually serious.

"What's with you? Your precious Shizu-chan is letting you fuck him, shouldn't you be ecstatic? It's disgusting to even think about, but shouldn't you be grateful? That the strongest man in Ikebukuro is letting you do him?"

Namie said, she couldn't imagine Heiwajima Shizuo, the man in a bartender suit, in such a submissive manner and she didn't want to.

That man must really be in love with that bastard Izaya

Well, not that it's any of my business.

"Well of course I appreciate Shizu-chan giving his body to me, but it's boring when it happens all the time."

Izaya muttered desolately. He let out a groan, burying his face into the table.

"Seriously, why? It's been a month already. Why won't Shizu-chan take me? Doesn't he feel any desire to?"

"â€¡Am I not desirable enough?"

"Or," Izaya said as if he was thinking about it, "Is my ass not desirable enough?"

Namie had promptly gone back to ignoring Izaya. She certainly didn't

want the sight of Izaya turning around and examining himself to be burned into her retina.

"It's not soft like a woman's, but I'm not a woman. But the shape is fine I suppose, and Shizu-chan chases me all the time so shouldn't he be seeing it all the time? So shouldn't he have suppressed desires for my â€" "

"Shut up, Izaya."

Namie scowled, and Izaya gave her a smirk, finally looking like himself.

"Namie, won't you give an evaluation â€" "

"No."

Namie said in disgust when Izaya had stood up and proceeded to turn his posterior towards her.

"Namieeeeeâ€|. "

"â€|.."

"Please, Namie? I can't examine my own behind!"

"Why don't you ask Heiwajima Shizuo? I'm sure he'd be delighted to."

"Shizu-chan chases me so he sees it all the time when I run away from him. But he never says anything about it â€" which is exactly what I'm concerned about. Soâ€|."

Izaya trailed off, and stood with his behind facing Namie until she said:

"I do not get paid enough for this."

But she seemed to give in, "You better not be flashing it in my face."

"Don't worry, I'm fully clothed."

Namie took a full on glance, using her trained eyes from her previous profession as the chief of Yagiri Pharmaceuticals.

"It's fine."

"Really?"

"Seriously, it's fine. What do you want me to say? It's firm and round? What are you, a woman? Your ass isn't too big or anything Miss Orihara."

Namie said sarcastically but Izaya seemed pleased at that.

"So it's not my ass then. Why won't Shizu-chan fuck me then?"

"What's the big deal, you two are still having sex."

Namie said, not saying the way it was being executed because it was disturbing to even think about.

She certainly didn't need the image of a submissive Heiwajima Shizuo, just hearing about it was disturbing enough.

Though she didn't want to think about a submissive Orihara Izaya either.

"But Shizu-chan was supposed to fuck me!"

Izaya was whining, and Namie snorted.

But before she could say anything, Izaya turned his face away so his expression wasn't visible, and said almost inaudibly " "

"...And I was prepared!"

" "

" "

" "

* * *

><p>Three weeks ago

" "

It had been two weeks since Orihara Izaya had unpredictably confessed his feelings and Heiwajima Shizuo had just as unpredictably accepted them.

They had gone from touching, to hugging, to kissing and now sexual contact.

The black haired man and the blond were entwined on the bed, all of their clothes on the floor except for the taller man's bartender shirt " "

Which was unbuttoned and hung over his frame, as his hands were placed on either side of Izaya's head, his face flushed.

" . Izaya. "

Shizuo said, his voice low and Izaya repressed a shudder as he met Shizuo's heated eyes.

" Shizu-chan... "

This was the moment, Izaya knew. This was the moment where a searing pain would soon assault him before overwhelming pleasure did as they were joined as one.

Fisting his hands in the sheets, Izaya leaned his head back and spread his legs.

"There's lube in the drawer."

He managed, his face burning and he closed his eyes in trepidation, the sound of the liquid being squeezed out resounding in his ears with his pounding heart.

A moment later, he opened his eyes to see a hand wrapped around his erection.

"Eh?"

Izaya said in surprise, stunned. He flinched slightly as the cold liquid enveloped his heated arousal, eyes growing wide.

And then there was the sound of squishing sounds, which came from fingers being thrust into an ass which definitely didn't belong to him.

"S-Shizu-chan?!"

The heated gaze returned to him. With a few more quick thrusts the fingers were removed, the sight and sound heating up the black haired man's face.

Though it was nothing compared to the man in a bartender shirt leaning over him, a hand taking hold of his cock.

"Should be enough."

Shizuo muttered to himself and Izaya snapped back to reality. He pushed out his hands towards the other man's chest.

"W-Wait. Wait, Shizu-chan!"

"Hah?"

"W-What are you doing?!"

Izaya shouted as Shizuo positioned himself above him in a way that clearly suggested that contrary to Izaya's expectations, he would be the one taking it.

"Shut up and stay still."

Shizuo growled and used one hand to pin Izaya's wrists above his head.

"No wait â€“ ahhhhhhh!"

A cry was torn out from Izaya's throat as he was suddenly submerged in a searing heat up to the hilt.

He barely registered the sound of harsh panting as he tried to gather himself, his wrists trembling in Shizuo's grip at the sudden heat and pleasure.

Which faded away for a moment before coming back twice as strong, squeezing his cock so tightly Izaya let out a pained cry.

When he opened his eyes, it was because he felt a hand on his

cheek.

"Sorry, looks like I didn't prepare myself properly."

"Shizuâ€|. -chanâ€| ."

Shizuo kissed him, softly and gently â€"

An ironic prelude when he lifted himself and slammed down on the throbbing rod, and groaned loudly when Izaya's body bucked, sending the black haired man's cock further into him.

"Shitâ€| ."

"Shizu-chan â€"!"

"Iâ€| zayaâ€| "

With his hands still restrained and unable to touch his lover, Izaya found himself the recipient of another kiss from Shizuo â€"

A passionate one with the tangling of tongues as Shizuo thrust his tongue into Izaya's mouth â€"

At the same time Izaya's cock was thrust into Shizuo's ass â€"

Hitting his prostate as his tongue touched a sensitive spot in Izaya's mouth, causing a whimper from the black haired man as the blond shuddered in pleasure with a moan himself.

"Haaahâ€| ."

"â€| Hotâ€| . Shizuâ€| .. can'tâ€| . nghâ€| ."

"Doesâ€| . itâ€| .. hurtâ€| .? "

Shizuo panted, barely able to get the words out, and lifting himself slightly so that he could.

"Idiotâ€| .." Izaya laughed weakly.

"Doesn'tâ€| . make senseâ€| . Shizu-chan is the one taking itâ€| so he should beâ€| .."

"â€| . the one in pain â€" ah! S-Shit stop kissingâ€| I'm trying to talkâ€| .! "

The unpredictable man had the audacity to laugh into his mouth before doing exactly the opposite of what Izaya wanted him to do.

They were having sex, as Shizuo rode Izaya, fucking himself on the other male's cock, bringing Izaya inside him as deeply as he could as he panted and groaned into Izaya's mouth, turning the black haired man on who moaned and thrust up as best as he could, wanting to evoke even more of those sounds from his lover.

"Shizu-chanâ€|..not so fastâ€|.."

Izaya barely managed before Shizuo shut him up with a kiss.

Shizuo dominated Izaya's mouth with his tongue, smirking and breathing heavily against his lips and muffling the other man's moans before impaling himself on Izaya's hot rod again â€"

Which brushed against his prostate, seeming to have become bigger and spreading him wider.

"â€|Ahhhâ€| ! Haaaahâ€| ..Damn it fleaâ€|.fuckâ€|..!"

His lean body shuddered as his brown eyes unhidden by his sunglasses were filled with pleasure at the sex.

His own nipples peeking out from his bartender shirt were hard, but he leaned down and took one of Izaya's nipples in his mouth instead.

Izaya jolted in shock, his eyes wide. Heat rushed to his face. He whimpered when Shizuo began to rub his other nipple gently with his thumb, his tongue coming out to lick its twin.

"S-Stop thatâ€|. I should be the one â€" ahhh!"

Shizuo's teeth had scraped against the hardening nub, causing Izaya to let out a helpless cry and his body to arch up, his leaking cock brushing against Shizuo's prostate as the blond man gave a breathless gasp.

"Seriouslyâ€|.stop itâ€|!"

Izaya had finally managed to free his hands when Shizuo's grip had gone lax and he was pushing against Shizuo's shoulders â€" before settling on shoving against the blond's head as he sucked on Izaya's nipple, coating it with his saliva.

The combination of scorching heat and pleasure and the sensation of his chest being toyed with by the other male drew a mewl from Izaya â€"

Especially when Shizuo began rocking back and forth, tightening Izaya's stomach with the tight and wet heat around his cock and the harsh pants against his chest.

"Haâ€|hahahâ€|..fuck you play dirtyâ€|.Shizu-chanâ€| ."

Izaya laughed with a smirk on his face, settling on pulling Shizuo's hair instead as he moaned as Shizuo's tongue swirled around his nipple.

"Yeahâ€|gonna get you all dirty flea. Gonna â€" haaahâ€|.nghâ€|.ahhh! â€|.come all over youâ€|."

"Getâ€|.me dirty, you dirty beast. Hurry upâ€|.and comeâ€| !"

Izaya sneered, and gathered all his energy and strength of his lower body strong from parkour into one hard thrust, slamming his cock into Shizuo's prostate, gritting his teeth at the wet heat â€"

As Shizuo howled in pleasure, his superhuman muscles stretching as his lean body was forced up and away from Izaya's chest — his mouth detaching from Izaya's nipple with dripping saliva as he panted and moaned, white liquid dripping from his erection straining against his stomach.

"Haâ€|hahahaâ€|. What a sight you areâ€|.!"

Izaya laughed at Shizuo, pride welling up in his chest at having made the strongest man in Ikebukuro make such a helpless expression.

"â€|. Ahhhâ€|..?"

Shizuo's voice had turned from a high pitched whine to a deep growl, and Izaya had the inkling he was in trouble.

Izaya's hands were pushed away from Shizuo's waist and pinned to the bed, as Shizuo's hands moved to his shoulders, holding him down against sweat-soaked sheets.

"Shizu-chanâ€|.?"

Izaya said apprehensively, and Shizuo gave a sadistic grin.

Izaya paled as Shizuo began to lift himself up, until only the tip of Izaya's dripping erection was inside.

Izaya could see almost his whole cock positioned at the strongest man's entrance.

"W-Wait â€""

"Too late."

Shizuo hissed and that was the only warning Izaya got before his mouth fell open in a scream, his slender body straining desperately against the force on his shoulders as he was entirely engulfed by almost scalding heat.

"Ahhhhh! Ahhhâ€|. haaaahâ€|.!"

Saliva trailed from Izaya's mouth as he tried to get the air back in his lungs, inhaling and exhaling shakily, his cheeks flushed as he stared with teary eyes at where he was balls deep inside Shizuo.

"Who'sâ€|.. a sight nowâ€|. eh Izaya-kuuuun?"

Shizuo didn't look much better off himself — his brown eyes were half lidded in pleasure and his mouth was slightly open with saliva trailing down his chin as he leaned forward, panting —

Yet he still managed an infuriating smirk at Izaya as if to say 'I win', and Izaya gathered himself enough to smirk back.

"Stillâ€|. Shizu-chan...AHHHHHH!"

Shizuo had lifted himself half way and slammed down with his superhuman strength, making all Izaya's efforts at getting his breath back for naught.

The black haired man mewled and moaned as the blond took pleasure from him, as he rode the information broker, impaling himself repeatedly on the other man's dripping desire.

"â€|.Nghhh! Gahhhâ€|haahâ€|..ahhhh â€" AH!"

Izaya's body shivered when Shizuo shuddered and cried out, his usually masculine voice breaking in a high pitched whine as the hard cock rubbed mercilessly against his prostate.

At that moment, Izaya wanted nothing more than to push Shizuo down and thrust and thrust and make the man in a bartender shirt make that sound again and again â€"

But unfortunately for him, it was an impossible ideal at the current moment for the pinned information broker who was still trying in vain to thrust up against the delicious heat.

"Shizu-chanâ€|.let goâ€|wanna moveâ€|.!"

"Shutâ€|.upâ€|.!"

"Hahâ€|.no fairâ€|.I can't even fuck Shizu-chan properly â€" ngh!"

His hands grabbed hold of the sheets again, squeezing them tightly for some form of leverage as his body arched all it could in restrained pleasure â€"

As Shizuo had begun to rub that spot again and again and his soft insides squeezed Izaya's hardness and the black haired man was gasping and moaning like he was the one being taken.

Izaya squeezed his eyes shut, turning his head to the side as he tried to avoid the arousing image of seeing his cock thrust in and out of the hole between the legs of the man in a bartender shirt â€"

And the other man's cock dripping with cum.

"Shizu-chanâ€|.I'mâ€|.gonnaâ€|. "

"â€|Comeâ€|.?"

"Comingâ€|.soâ€|.move awayâ€|.!"

Shizuo exhaled, then pushed himself down on Izaya's cock which was reaching its limit, suppressing a shudder as he turned Izaya's face so that he was looking at him.

"It'sâ€|fine. Come inside."

"Dirtyâ€|.Don'tâ€|.wantâ€|.!"

Shizuo scowled and his hand moved from Izaya's face to his own neglected cock, which he began to jerk and stroke, making his insides spasm around Izaya's cock and the other man to let out a cry.

"Noâ€|. . ! "

It seemed Izaya was still resolutely trying to hold his pleasure back, his face fully flushed red as he let out a whimper at the strain.

Shizuo's eyes seemed to soften and harden almost at the same time and he snarled, the sound reaching Izaya's reddened ears.

He lifted himself up and down, beginning to ride the other man's cock vigorously again as he jerked Izaya's hair with his free hand, the other jerking his own cock.

"Don'tâ€|. be â€" ahâ€|. stubborn, fleaâ€|. ! Come insideâ€|. meâ€|. ! "

Shizuo's possessive growl and the sight of his cock disappearing inside the blond in a full thrust was Izaya's undoing.

"Ahhâ€| ahhhâ€| ahhhhhh! AHHHHHHH â€" ! "

Izaya screamed out with the pressure he had been holding back, his no longer restrained body free to thrust fully up into Shizuo as his cock released spurts and spurts of white liquid inside the other man â€"

Whose body shook violently at the feeling of Izaya's cock so deep inside him, and Izaya's cum splattering his sore insides.

With a few more deep thrusts from the muscles in his spread open thighs and the rapid jerking of his bobbing cock, Shizuo came with a long moan â€"

Coming so hard the white fluid flew into the air, landing on both his own stomach and Izaya's flushed, sweat-soaked, naked body.

Izaya exhaled as Shizuo looked like he was about to collapse on top of him, hot breaths coming out from his mouth.

But the man in a bartender shirt had to upset his expectations again.

"Shizuâ€| . -chanâ€| . "

"â€|. Izaya. "

Pulling himself off Izaya's cock and unheeding of the white liquid dripping from inside him, Shizuo laid down on the bed next to Izaya, staring at him with his brown eyes.

Before Izaya could open his mouth, he was brought against Shizuo's chest.

"Shizu-chan? "

Izaya said in surprise, raising his gaze.

"Izaya..."

Shizuo said again, then wrapped his arms around the flea and drifted off peacefully to sleep, a content smile on his face.

"..."

Falling asleep right after sex...

After our first time.

Before his partner.

So unromantic.

Izaya frowned, almost pouting as he was forced to lay his head against Shizuo's naked chest as Shizuo cuddled him in his sleep.

...Why...

Do I feel so violated...?

It was the last thought he had before he drifted off into slumber in his blond lover's arms.

â€|

â€|

Two weeks ago

â€|

This time, I'll make him see.

I've prepared beforehand after all.

All for this moment.

Izaya thought in determination, and inhaled.

"Shizu-chan..."

"Mm?"

Izaya could already feel his face warming as he said:

"We...don't need lube this time."

Shizuo tilted his head and Izaya was about to show him exactly why with his ready entrance â€"

But Shizuo denied him the opportunity to as before Izaya could even voice his dismay Shizuo had grabbed him and impaled himself on

him.

"AHHHHHHhhH!"

"Gahâ€| .! "

Shizuo panted, his eyes slightly wide as if he hadn't expected that amount of pain.

"Youâ€| ..whyâ€| ..?!"

Izaya yelled once he got his breath back and Shizuo looked at him quizzically.

"What do you mean why? You wanted to do it dry right?"

Shizuo said bluntly and Izaya stared.

Then the black haired man covered his burning face with his arm, closing his legs and hiding the embarrassed tears in his eyes.

"â€| ..You idiot!"

â€|

A week ago

â€|

"Hey Shizu-chan, don't you think we should switch?"

"Huh?"

"Shizu-chan is always fucking himself on me, doesn't Shizu-chan want to try it the other way instead?"

"â€| .This way's fine."

Shizuo said, and Izaya's heart sank.

"But if you insistâ€| ."

Izaya's heart lifted â€"

At the same time he was lifted up and placed down so he was straddling Shizuo, the blond wrapping his long legs around his waist.

"â€| .Eh?"

Izaya was flummoxed at the sudden turn around. Shizuo looked at him, eyebrows furrowing.

"You wanted it this way,
right?"

"â€| "

"Izaya?"

"Ahhhâ€|hahaâ€|.hahahahaha! Hahahahaha!"

"â€|What the hell are you laughing at?"

Shizuo frowned, and Izaya just shook his head and looked down with a wry smirk.

"Ah, I give up. You win, Shizu-chan. You winâ€|."

He said, and gave in with a thrust.

â€|

â€|

â€|

* * *

><p> "â€"So many times. So many times, Namie, until it became frustrating! Why does that iron golem always have to be unpredictable?! Beasts should act like beasts and terrify, not suddenly become unpredictably docile!"<p>

Fortunately for Izaya's secretary, she was a smart woman who was able to extract the meaning of Izaya's illustrations of his sexual encounters which she wanted to know nothing about.

"So when you entered the relationship, you expected to be the bottom. So when Shizuo wanted to be the bottom instead, he upset your expectations."

Namie said in amusement, Izaya's reaction having temporarily overcome her disgust.

"Exactly!"

Izaya threw his hands up into the air as if glad someone finally understood.

"So, why? I've tried everything â€" preparation beforehand, I already said the other way, how could that protozoic brain interpret it that way â€" just how dense can a guy get?!"

Namie was amused, for there the man who loved humans was, complaining like a normal human, for he was unable to accept how things had turned out in his relationship with one particular human.

Heiwajima Shizuo has that big an impact on Izaya, huh?

"It's been a monthâ€|..."

Izaya was saying rather depressingly, his head on the table and Namie turned to look at him.

He straightened, placing his cheek on his hand as he turned the other way.

"We've had sex several times, but I've never once had Shizu-chan inside me."

"...I still haven't been able to feel Shizu-chan like I thought I could."

Namie was torn between disgust and sympathy for that was how sad Izaya looked.

"Why don't you just tell him to do it?"

"...It's too embarrassing."

"Embarrassing? The things you've done to get him to fuck you are embarrassing on a whole different level than just telling him what you want. Isn't that how it is with you, anyway? You're always open with your own desires right? Or is that man somehow different?"

"...I have my pride."

Izaya finally said as if reluctant to even acknowledge it. Namie was surprised he was being so honest.

"And so you decide to execute your desire in a roundabout manner. It isn't any of my business but that man obviously can't read between the lines, so you either suck it up or you won't get to suck it in."

"What a crude woman you are, Namie. And, I've already tried that 'sucking it up', that is."

That was a mental image Namie definitely didn't need. She swiftly replaced it with an image of Seiji.

"And telling your sex life to a stranger isn't?"

"What are you talking about, you're not a stranger."

But Izaya was smiling now, though there was a different tinge to it

"But thanks, Namie."

"..."

"Somehow," the black haired man stretched his arms as he got up from the table. "I feel better now."

"Now I regret listening to you."

Namie said, but Izaya only laughed good-naturedly as he made his way to the door, an appreciative smile on his face.

"I'm going out for a while."

"To tell Heiwajima Shizuo to fuck you?"

"No way."

Izaya brushed off as he opened the door, exiting the apartment with a wave of his hand.

"I'm going to get information of course."

â€|

â€|

* * *

><p>A hour later, in an apartment in Kawagoe Highway

â€|

"Hey Shinra. If Celty was a man, would you be the one taking it?"

That was definitely not what Shinra had expected to hear when Izaya had invited himself into his house, and seated himself on his couch, inviting the owner of the house to take a seat with him.

He choked on his drink, putting the mug Celty had given him as a present down as he smiled shakily.

"Whyâ€|.the sudden question?"

He asked, for that kind of bluntness was something he would have expected from Shizuo instead.

He blinked then looked to make sure he hadn't somehow accidentally thought Shizuo was Izaya.

But what he was seeing was definitely black hair and not blond. And the man was in a fur trimmed jacket and not a bartender suit. Also, the voice had sounded like Izaya's, only more contemplative â€"

Like now.

"â€|Because I've been thinking."

For a moment, Shinra thought Celty's alien theories were right and an alien had made Shizuo and Izaya switch bodies â€"

"â€|About our relationship."

"Ehâ€|.Izaya?"

"What is it, Shinra?"

"Ah nothing, just making sure you're Izayaâ€|.because Orihara Izaya speaking about a relationship is a bit surreal you know?"

"What are you talking about, it's not as if you didn't already know."

Izaya said distractedly as if Shinra hadn't expressed his concern, then continued â€"

"So? What role would you play if your lover was a man?"

"Hm, whatever role Celty wants me to play I guess!"

"Would you want to be fucked by him?"

"That's quite direct of you Izaya-kun â€" but I suppose so! Man or woman, I just want to feel and love Celty as much as possible, and if Celty wants to do me, I'd welcome it greatly! It doesn't matter to me what position I'd take, I'd still just want to touch Celty as much as I can; as long as I can do that, I'd be content. Ah but Celty as a manâ€|. I'm not interested in my own gender but if it's Celtyâ€|. Celty pushing me down aggressively, all of Celty's attention on meâ€|...!"

"Then would Celty want to be done or do you?"

"Knowing Celty, if she was a man it would probably take even longer for her â€" well, him to give his body to me. Since Celty already feels insecure â€" which is so cute by the way â€" about her own body compared to a human female's. So if Celty was a man, the comparison would still be to a human female once he learns that male-male relationships like the one I would have with Celty if she was a man, are abnormal. And then if we were to be in bed Celty would try to hide his body from me because he's embarrassed â€"ah even as a male Celty would be so adorable! And I don't think I would be able to resist so I suppose I would be top? My lovely Celty would probably think like he's not sure how to do it, and if Celty was a male I would have done research â€""

"Alright that's enough information."

Izaya said and seemed to lapse into thinking mode again, to Shinra's bemusement.

"Hey Shinra, do you think I would be top or bottom? Honestly."

"With Shizuo?"

"Yeah."

"Bottom."

Shinra said without hesitation, and Izaya looked amused.

"Are you sure? What if it's the opposite way around?"

"But that's impossible, since it's Shizuo. Before you two became lovers he was the one who gave chase and you were the one running away â€" the dynamic is already established, isn't it? You're not the type to push someone down, especially a dominant man like Shizuo, you're too much of a controlled man to perform such an aggressive act. I suppose you could do it to see their reaction â€" but it's not as if you would have any of such intentions."

"You're not submissive, but you're not aggressive either. You're domineering, but you're not dominant. You can hold your own against Shizuo but your strength is defensive. Not like Shizuo's aggressive strength or even Celty's neutral strength. You're not like Shizuo who doesn't hesitate to unleash his power or Celty who will use her power

if she has to, your fighting skills are to defend yourself not attack someone. With that kind of mentality, how can you dominate someone aggressive like Shizuo?"

"After all, you just want to 'see', and that mostly involves putting yourself in a passive position, doesn't it? And it's not as if you have repressed desires of any sort which could lead to aggression â€“ since you're a man eternally true to your own desires; unless your desires are left unfulfilled because they involve someone else."

Izaya was silent with a smile on his face as Shinra dissected him like he would one of his patients, as Shinra continued without missing a beat.

"Of course since Shizuo loves you he would probably let you top if you wanted to but would you even want to â€“"

"What did you say?"

"Eh? That Shizuo would let you top?"

"Before that, Shinra."

The smile was gone from Izaya's face, an unusual action for the man who always had a perpetual smile on his face.

Noticing this, Shinra thought back to the previous moment and deduced â€“

"â€|. That Shizuo loves you?"

"Why?"

"What do you mean why? Isn't Shizuo in love with you?"

Shinra spoke as if he was slightly surprised Izaya hadn't known.

"Is he?"

"Isn't he? Why would Shizuo be together with you if he doesn't love you? Especially when you've been his enemy for most of his life? Shizuo's an honest man so the only reason for him to be together with you is because his feelings have changed from hatred to love right?"

"â€| Heiwajima Shizuo is in love with me?"

Shinra looked at Izaya, adjusting his glasses as he did so.

"â€| Yes."

His only friend was smiling at him.

"Heiwajima Shizuo is in love with you, Orihara Izaya."

Silence, as Izaya tried to comprehend information an information broker like him hadn't known â€“

And its reliability â€"

The source of which was going forth as if he had figured out the issue from one glance â€"

"So if you're worried about being the bottom forever, you don't have to be. Shizuo might seem rigid but he's a pretty flexible guy if you talk to him and don't piss him off. You just have to tell him, and he'll listen. Otherwise he'll just take it as everything is fine and the relationship is going well."

Which he was wrong about, for once.

But Izaya didn't even feel amused at this.

No I'm worried about being the top forever

Izaya had such half-sarcastic thoughts to himself as he smoothly moved on.

"It's not as if I have an example to follow, since even though Shizu-chan and I aren't gay, we're the only ones in a homosexual relationship since we happen to be attracted to each other who is male. Everyone else in this city is more or less in a heterosexual relationship â€" even the guy with the weirdest relationship ever; his lover is headless, but still female."

"Why do you need to model your relationship off someone else's? I never thought you were the type to imitate others, Izaya. Even though it seemed impossible, I thought if you ever got into a relationship you would do everything possible to make it unique and yours."

Shinra had bounced his idea back at him so hard Izaya was taken aback.

"Like Celty and I! In our relationship, I focus on us â€" I don't compare us to say, Mikado-kun and Anri-chan, even though we're both heterosexual couples. What is there to compare? My love for Celty can't be compared to anyone else's!"

Shinra was staring with starry eyes, but Izaya was no longer paying attention.

Shinra is right.

Why did I wish for a model to follow?

Why did I think that?

It's not like me at all

â€|..Just what is it that I want from my relationship with that man?

Honestly, I don't know.

I've never had a relationship before.

â€|.Seriously, that guy always causes me troubleâ€|...

"It's fine, isn't it?"

His friend of almost a decade seemed to be speaking again, and Izaya blinked.

"To not follow the crowd. After all, you're Orihara Izaya, and he's Heiwajima Shizuo. It's nothing unusual. Since it's you two, and the both of you have never had a relationship before, being troubled over it is nothing surprising."

"Whatever kind of relationship you end up with, it would be the result of Heiwajima Shizuo and Orihara Izaya getting together, something unpredictable that has never happened before so whatever happens would be something even information broker Orihara Izaya wouldn't know."

Izaya couldn't refrain from staring at Shinra.

"...Are you trying to..."

The word was so foreign to him that it took Izaya a while to find it.

"...cheer me up?"

Shinra looked amused, and Izaya had the fleeting thought he must look pretty bad now.

Thankfully, his face remained at a normal temperature.

"Well, I suppose. I know it must be foreign to a bastard like you but as a friend, I am trying to cheer my friend up. After all you're not even looking like a bastard anymore...more like a lost child."

Shinra said in his usual light-hearted tone despite the look in his eyes.

"Ha-hahahaha! I must look quite pathetic...for the guy who has no interest in humans to take pity on me."

Izaya said with a self-deprecating smile as he averted his gaze slightly.

"...Shinra."

"What is it?"

"...Thanks."

It was barely there, but Shinra heard it anyway.

Before Shinra could reply, Izaya stood up and spoke.

"Well then, I'll just be taking my leave..."

"Hey, Shinra. The door was open so I just came in..."

Two pairs of brown eyes blinked at the same time.

"Oh, Shizuo? What a coincidence, Izaya was just leaving."

"â€|. Ahâ€| .."

Shizuo was looking at Izaya from where he stood a distance away from the couch, as he moved closer.

Izaya moved to meet him.

"Hey, Shizu-chan."

Izaya said. He still acted the same way when Shizuo hadn't been his lover, speaking flippantly â€"

But after which he leaned up to kiss Shizuo affectionately on the cheek, touching briefly his lover's wild blond hair.

Shizuo turned his head and his smiling lips met the side of Izaya's head.

"Izaya."

He said simply, but his expression was one of contentment.

Izaya smiled as Shizuo leaned down and nuzzled his neck, pressing a kiss to the pale skin. Patting Shizuo's hair, he asked.

"Why is Shizu-chan here?"

"â€|. Came to see Shinra 'bout somethin'. â€|. You?"

Shizuo replied in a mumble from Izaya's neck, but his sharp eyes were already surveying his form.

"I'm not here for medical reasons."

Izaya said and messed up Shizuo's hair for good measure.

Shizuo drew away and wrapped an arm around Izaya's waist, muttering.

"That's good."

He said and was about to lean down and kiss his lover, when a voice called out.

"Not to interrupt the moment â€" but might I remind you two to not commit lovey-dovey acts right in front of my virgin eyes! In the sanctity of my and Celty's lovey-dovey home?!"

"Ahhhhh?!"

Shizuo growled and Izaya looked on in amusement.

"Bastardâ€|. you got a problem with my display of affection towards my flea? In that caseâ€|..I'LL KNOCK YOU OUT SO YOU CAN'T SEE!"

Shizuo roared as he lifted up the couch with one hand, the other hand

holding Izaya by the waist.

"Wahhhh! No! I HAVE NO PROBLEM AT ALL, REALLY! So just put my couch down alright Shizuo?"

Shinra said, already backing away as he looked warily at his own couch above Shizuo's head.

"You sure were kicking up a fuss a while ago..."

Shizuo said and would have advanced threateningly had he not been holding Izaya possessively to him.

"A-Ah, well look, didn't you say you wanted to talk to me about something? You can't do that if you knock me out. Right, Izaya?"

"I don't know. If what Shizu-chan wants to talk to you about is more significant than you interrupting our lovey-dovey moment, that is."

Izaya said, and seemed perfectly smug snuggled up against Shizuo's chest, to Shinra's chagrin.

"No Orihara-kun, that display doesn't suit you at all! It would be more fitting for an innocent female " like Celty! Ahhhh Celty resting against my chest!"!"

Shinra said and went into a lovey-dovey trance before he remembered the threat looming over him "

"Speaking of which, you're usually the one Shizuo-kun throws things at, how did I become a target?! Ahhh you two becoming lovers is really bad for my health "

"BADDDDD?!"

"Trigger word," Izaya sighed exaggeratedly as he spoke nonchalantly from Shizuo's chest, flipping a hand with an amused smirk.

"Do it, my monster."

Shizuo grinned ferociously as Shinra was scrambling away. He threw the couch forward "

Or would have had it not been restrained by a force outside of his control. Shizuo blinked, craning his neck to look.

Shinra noticed before him, and the headless woman who had intervened for her lover's health was soon tackled by him.

"Celty! Just in time, my darling! Did you sense it? Did you sense I was in danger?! Ah Celty, I always knew our hearts were connected through space and time "! Saving me from being flattened by our own living room couch"what a wonderful wife you are! That's right Celty, our furniture should be placed properly on the floor and not used to injure innocent people, especially not the couch where we "

[I'm not your wife! W-We're not married yet!]

Celty finally managed after freaking out as she was suddenly hugged by Shinra in front of Shizuo and Izaya. She shoved Shinra away.

[Cut that last sentence! Have you no shame?! Also, I doubt you were innocent. What did you say to piss Shizuo off?]

"W-Wha Celtyâ€|...!"

Shinra whined, but Celty didn't give in, and she held out her hands to stop Shinra from hugging her again.

"Shizuo and Izaya were being lovey-dovey in our home! Our home, Celty! So I just said to take that elsewhere, and Shizuo got mad! Izaya encouraged him and he was about to throw the couch at me before you came, Celty!"

Shinra spoke with excited black eyes as he reached forward again.

"That's why, Celty! We must make up with our lovey-doveyness, let me kiss you on the neck like Shizuo did to Izaya â€" oof!"

[We don't need to make up for that! And of course Shizuo would get mad, if you interrupt his moment with his lover!]

"But I didn't want to witness such a scene with Izaya and Shizuo in our home! And Celty why don't you let me hug you â€" look at Shizuo and Izaya! Look at the romantic position they're in even when Shizuo is holding our couch above his head â€" it's unfair! It's unfair, Celty! If Celty won't let me hold her around the waist, would you like to hold me instead?! Celty is the one battling Shizuo after all, I shall be just a helpless damsel in distress seeking protection in my knight's arms from that vicious tiger!"

Shinra said with a dreamy look in his eyes and proceeded to swoon like a 'damsel in distress' and Celty jolted and backed away â€"

Causing a yelp to sound as Shinra hit the ground as he wasn't caught by his headless 'knight'.

"Owwwwâ€|owowow! Ahhh Celty why didn't you catch meâ€|.!"

[How could I?!"

Celty responded but helped Shinra up, pressing her hand to his forehead.

[Are you alright? You didn't hit your head too hard, did you?]

"Ahahahaâ€|I'm fine Celty! Ah even if Celty didn't catch me, being shown such concern by Celty is revitalizing!"

Shinra was swooning again as he clutched Celty's hand and Celty just shook her neck as she turned to Shizuo and Izaya.

[Sorry for Shinra's rudeness. But Shizuo, that's our couch so could you put it down?]

Shizuo scoffed but moved to put the couch down as Celty removed her shadows.

"â€|.Fine. But the next time he interrupts a moment with my lover I won't show any mercy."

Shizuo growled and Shinra flinched, scooting over to Celty's side.

"I won't! I'll keep my mouth sealed shut the next time so spare me from your violence, Shizuo-kun! And Izaya-kun, won't you say something as a responsible lover?!"

"But I agree with Shizu-chan. I don't appreciate my touching moment with my lover being interrupted either."

Izaya said with a sharp smile and Shinra grimaced.

"Ahhhâ€|.what an aggressive couple! Look at them! Look at them, Celty! Celty and I are just trying to live peacefully in our home and yet Shizuo and Izaya are disturbing our peace! I thought they wouldn't do so anymore now that they've become a couple but it's not the case at all! It's Shizuo and Izaya after all! In fact it's worse â€" now that they're agreeing with each other's aggressiveness!"

[Noted. Right, Shinra?]

"Rightâ€|.Celtyâ€|.!"

Celty flinched as Shinra had begun rubbing his head against her shoulder.

[Will you stop that?!]

"But having had to deal with that crazy couple over there, being reunited with Celty again is just â€" heavenly bliss! I'm so happy, Celty!"

Celty 'sighed'. With Shinra resting happily against her shoulder, she flashed her PDA to the blond and black haired man.

[Ignore him. Anyway what are you two here for?]

"Shizu-chan came to talk to Shinra, and I did too. So I'll just be leaving now, so if you would get your lover back to reality lest mine gets pissed off againâ€|..."

Izaya gestured with a smile, somehow managing to seem elegant while being settled comfortably against Shizuo's chest, his other hand running through Shizuo's hair, an action which seemed to calm the man in a bartender suit down.

[You heard that, didn't you? Stop fooling around and go talk to your friend!]

"The friend who almost threw our couch at me?"

[Yes. And he wouldn't have done that if you hadn't pissed him off.]

Celty responded, as if she couldn't believe Shinra would piss Shizuo off even after knowing him for years.

"Ahhâ€|.alright if Celty says soâ€|"

Shinra bemoaned as he had to leave Celty's shoulder. He moved forward, smiling sheepishly at Shizuo.

"Hey, so what did you want to talk about?"

Shizuo removed his lips from Izaya's forehead. Taking note of the situation, Izaya ruffled his hair then extricated himself from Shizuo's hold, pressing an affectionate departing kiss to his other cheek before striding smoothly away.

[I'll see you out.]

"That would be appreciated."

Shizuo watched as Izaya exited the apartment, Celty following him.

"â€|.What did you and Izaya talk about?"

Shizuo said almost distractedly as he stared after his lover.

"That's private information, Shizuo."

Shizuo frowned at being deprived of information on his lover, but shrugged it off since it was Shinra saying it.

After all if Shinra whom he considered an invasive nutjob was saying it was private information, it probably really was.

The door closed behind Izaya and Celty. Shaking his head of wild blond hair, Shizuo plopped himself down on the couch that was once again on the ground.

"Anyway, Shinra."

"What is it, Shizuo?"

Shinra asked as he took a seat opposite the blond, who said as if recalling â€"

"â€|.There's something I need to talk to you about."

Shinra looked contemplative for a moment, before he spoke.

"â€|.I've been wondering butâ€|.why me?"

"Huh?"

Shizuo said as his childhood friend gave him a sheepish smile.

"I mean, this is very unusual for you, Shizuo, to confide in me. You usually talk to Celty."

"Ah. Yeah I wanted to" but I thought it would be better to come to you."

"Since you're probably the guy who knows Izaya the best."

Shinra was sweating slightly as Shizuo stared at him as if unhappy at that.

"...I'm honored you think so, Shizuo-kun". being Izaya's lover and all."

He treaded carefully, not wanting to set Shizuo off again "

After he had become more peaceful while in a romantic relationship with Izaya.

Especially after it had killed two birds with one stone " being that Izaya also taunted him much less it was nonexistent compared to the past.

Or three, since it meant less trouble for Ikebukuro from its two biggest troublemakers who were no longer causing each other as much trouble as before.

Thus Shinra supported the abnormal relationship between two of Ikebukuro's most abnormal, wholeheartedly "

For it was the catalyst for ensuring his peaceful everyday life with Celty.

Though, he hadn't expected to need to be the facilitator for the unusual couple.

When did I become a love counsellor?

Shinra thought, but turned his attention back to Shizuo when the man in a bartender suit began to speak.

"

"...So...Izaya's been pretty distant lately..."

"

"

* * *

><p>Celty, who had been waiting outside after seeing Izaya out, turned when the door opened.</p>

[Did you manage to clear your doubts?]

"To be honest, I'm not sure."

Shizuo replied as he walked forward. He clicked his tongue, looking sideways before lapsing into silence.

"Hey Celty. Am I a bad lover?"

If Celty had a head, she would have blinked. Slightly taken aback by the sudden question from Shizuo, she inquired "Well?"

[Why do you think that?]

"Well, I don't know. I just feel I'm not doing something right, but I don't know what it is. That's why Izaya's been distant. I told Shinra about it, but he said it's nothing much. He won't tell me what Izaya talked to him about...he said I should figure things out on my own. But he said it's nothing to worry about."

"Well...Somehow, that isn't really reassuring. I just want to know the reason."

Shizuo said, and stood in silence again. Celty thought over his words for a while, before communicating to him.

[I'm not sure. I don't know the details, so I can't say whether you did something wrong.]

"I see."

[But, Izaya isn't the type of man who will allow himself to be trapped in a relationship that isn't good for him. Since he's the type to just do whatever he wants for his own sake.]

[So if he's in a relationship with you, there's no way you can be a bad lover, at least in his eyes.]

Shizuo looked at her from behind his sunglasses, and Celty concluded for him.

[It's probably some personal issue. I don't think Izaya has ever had a relationship before, so he may be personally troubled. But since he wasn't being distant just now, I think the issue is resolved after he talked to Shinra.]

"Well. Yeah."

It was just a single word, but Shizuo's expression seemed to have lightened as he turned his gaze with a wry smile.

"That flea's a liar, and he can't be honest. That's why I thought, even if I asked him if something was wrong, I wouldn't get a straight answer."

"Well. But, he's honest in his actions. His actions speak louder than his words. He can't lie with what he does, and I felt it just now."

The blond man in a bartender suit pushed up his sunglasses, averting his gaze.

"It's stupid but...I felt a bit jealous of Shinra. Even though I'm his lover, Izaya can't talk to me so he has to go to Shinra. Well...Even though I'm doing the same with you and Shinra himself. It doesn't really make sense...and it kind of pisses me off."

Celty's shoulders shook at this as if she was laughing, but it was not mocking. She had to gather herself before she could express

herself to Shizuo.

[Don't worry! :) It's normal when you have a lover. It's because Shinra always says he only needs me that I'm doing the opposite â€“ encouraging him to foster connections. If he was more open to making friends, I would probably be jealous as well.]

"Really?"

Shizuo asked, his eyes filled with open curiosity.

[Yeah. At least Shinra says he's jealous of me knowing more and more people, but it's just that. I know he's actually happy for me that I'm talking to more people. Isn't it the same for you?]

"â€|That may be true. I don't have to be jealous of other people because Izaya says his love for me is on a different level than that for his humans, who don't like him anyway. So I actually think he should talk to people more."

Shizuo muttered as if to himself, then shifted his gaze to his friend with a smile.

"But you're right, Celty. I'm still a bit jealousâ€|..but if talking to Shinra helped him resolve whatever issue he was dealing with, then I'm glad. Even if I wasn't the one to help him with it."

"Because it's better than that flea being distantâ€|it's not like him at all. He's like an invasive cockroach that creeps up on you, or a shitty flea who clings on you and sucks whatever you have to give, and anything else is just weird."

Shizuo was attaching such negative connotations to his own lover, but the smile on his face as he talked belied such.

The sunglasses-wearing man in a bartender suit chuckled and gave his friend the woman in a rider suit a sheepish smile.

"Ahhhhhâ€|. I kind of feel better now after talking to you about it. Thanks for listening to me."

[No problem. I know we haven't talked for a while since Izaya became your lover, so I thought maybe he was helping you deal with things. But I'm always here if you need a listening ear.]

"Yeah. Thanks, Celty. Then, I'll see you around."

Shizuo said with a casual wave as he departed, his hands in his pockets and a smile on his face.

â€|

Celty looked after him for a while, before she turned and made her way into the house she shared with Shinra â€“ whom she met when she opened the door.

[Has anyone ever told you it's not polite to eavesdrop?]

"But I wasn't eavesdropping! I got impatient because Celty didn't come in for so long, so I was going to check up on Celty! But you

were talking to Shizuo, so I just stood and waited."

Shinra said with a bright smile like a child who had been caught with his hand in the cookie jar but didn't see anything wrong about it.

"So, Shizuo is jealous of me huh? Eh, he must really like Izaya then. Possibly even love. Ah, but what I'm more interested in is what you said! Celty, would you really be jealous if I made more friends; because hearing you say that makes me eager to make more friends so I can see Celty's beautiful jealousy." Should I give Celty the cold shoulder like Izaya did to Shizuo?" "g wah!"

[I dare you.]

Shinra smiled sheepishly at those words from his beloved even after being punched in the stomach.

"I'm joking! Unlike a certain other someone, I would never do that to my lover. How could I?! Whenever I see Celty I feel so happy, nothing Celty does could ever upset me, I could never even pretend to be mad at Celty!"

Shinra had said these words as he twirled around the entrance of their home, his white lab coat swirling around him as he threw his hands up into the air with a happy smile on his face.

Celty briefly wondered if her friend Shizuo had to deal with the same childish action from the man in a fur trimmed jacket, as Shinra ended his twirling by taking hold of her hands.

"Ah Celty, I really love you!"

Shinra sighed in pure happiness, as if he was a man who had come upon an oasis in a desert.

[So you wouldn't be mad even if I cheated on you?]

"Ehhhhh?!"

The way Shinra's eyes widened so suddenly was almost comical, and Celty couldn't help but giggle a little.

[I'm joking. I would never do that. Who would I even cheat on you with, idiot.]

"Shizuo?"

Shinra said, and Celty just 'sighed' at him.

[Shizuo already has a lover. And more importantly|. I have one too.]

She conveyed to Shinra as she clasped his hands, and Shinra's expression transformed into one of joy.

"Celtyyyyyyâ€|.!"

For once, Celty didn't resist when Shinra hugged her, perhaps because

saying that she already had Shinra as her lover while her close friend Shizuo had his own made her aware of how she really did have a lover.

That's right

This guy is my lover

He's really energetic, a bit annoying, and he can never stop talking nonsense

But he's also really caring and he loves me exactly the way I am

â€|Shinra is my lover.

The headless woman placed her hands on her lover's shoulders, leaning up to rest contentedly on Shinra's shoulder as he hugged her around the waist, a blissful smile on his face.

For once, they didn't need words. Because they were communicating by touch their feelings for each other, as Shinra closed his eyes with an expression of true happiness as he held his love, and Celty allowed herself to be held by Shinra, and relaxed completely in his arms.

"I really love you, Celty."

Shinra said simply with none of his usual exuberance, as if it was a fact that would never change.

Celty didn't look at him, but her shadows held up her PDA to show him her feelings.

[â€|Me too.]

She felt herself squeezed a bit tighter and couldn't help but smile inwardly as Shinra was making happy noises.

[Don't get used to it.]

She said fondly, but her lover seemed to take her seriously.

"I could never! People say if you do something too often you'd get bored because you satiate to it, but I could never tire of Celty's lovely body â€"! It's so smooth and perfect and it belongs to Celty and even your brea-"

Shinra's perverted nature unfortunately came through and the cost was his lover leaving his arms and 'shouting' in his face.

[Don't be a pervert!]

"Ahahahaâ€|. Celty's blushing face is so cute â€" gahhh!"

Celty was so embarrassed she barely remembered to not hit Shinra in the exact same place as earlier.

She had no idea how Shinra could look so happy even while doubled over in pain, but remembered her lover was probably a

masochist.

"Well if it's for Celty I'm a masochist, but the true masochist is Izaya Â€"

[S-Stop reading my mind!]

"AhahahaÂ|. sorry, Celty. But your expression was basically telling me I'm a masochist! So if it's for Celty, I will be as masochistic as Celty wants!"

[I don't want you to be masochistic!]

"B-But I could never be a sadist towards my beloved Celty Â€"

[That's not the point!]

Celty covered her 'face' with her hand. Feeling as if the conversation was going nowhere, she decided to return to their original topic.

[Speaking of IzayaÂ|]

"Hm? What about him?"

Celty wondered how to convey what she was feeling, before deciding on just saying what she thought.

[It's been a month, and I still can't believe it.]

And then as if reminiscing, she paused for a moment.

Though, it's been only a week since we knew_

Â€|

* * *

><p>Shinra and Celty's apartment, a week ago sometime in July

Â€|

"I think asking Izaya would be the fastest. As long as you're honest, you can work hard together. What do you think?"

"Â|. Yeah, that flea's an informant."

Shizuo said after he had thought contemplatively about this, and Shinra was slack in surprise for a while.

"Â|..Eh?"

He said as if he hadn't expected the result of his own actions.

Celty, who had been scolding Shinra in her 'head', paused in her scolding to stare in stunned silence at Shizuo who was calmly drinking tea.

Eh?

Wait, rewind.

Shizuo suddenly said he told Mikado he was quitting the Dollars

And I thought it could be because of that he's acting weird

Then I said Mikado is just a kid so we shouldn't involve him in the stalker incident, and Shizuo agreed

Thenâ€|. Then Shinra brought Izaya up out of nowhere â€" just when Izaya hasn't been seen for weeks!

We expected Shizuo to get mad, but he didn't. And now he's just calmly sipping his tea!

S-Shouldn't the tea be spilled because he broke the cup? !

â€|..There's no connection here!

Kasuka had his mouth slightly open in surprise, as Ruri looked puzzled.

Anri didn't seem like she could comprehend what was happening.

A meow came from Dokusonmaru, like even he was befuddled at the situation.

Shizuo, oblivious to all this, tilted his head and muttered to himself:

"â€|.Would texting or calling be faster?"

He put down the unbroken cup and took out his cellphone, dialed a number then held the phone to his ear.

Wait, wasn't Izaya stabbed and hospitalized?

He hasn't contacted me since

Even if it's Izaya, should we be disturbing a guy in the hospital?

Celty hadn't seen the report headline, 'Stabbed Patient Vanished?!' and she was drawing such conclusions based on the lack of jobs from Izaya lately.

It also seemed she had temporarily forgotten about her disregard towards Izaya on the basis of not disturbing an injured patient in the hospital.

Celty was about to put aside all the confusion and suggest to Shizuo this, when Shizuo spoke.

"Oi, you're from Dollars too right? I quitted the gang already, so you got any inside information?"

"â€|.About whatâ€|.you've heard of the stalker incident haven't you? My little brother and his lover are in danger, so I need your help."

Shinra's mouth was opening and closing like he was dumbfounded as he was for once speechless.

"â€|..Whatever, you're a broker too right. You know what's going on, don't you?"

"â€|Tch! Like hell I'm going to say that. â€|.Oi you fleaâ€|I don't have time for games hereâ€|.JUST GIVE ME THE INFORMATION ALREADY OR OUR DATE'S OFF!"

Shizuo said, his expression twisted with anger like everytime he was dealing with Izaya, but the words that had come out of his mouth were ones none of the room's occupants had never expected he would ever say.

Shinra and Celty turned to each other with a 'did you hear what I just heard' look, as Shizuo continued on, clueless about the reactions his statement had caused.

"â€|..Not even for your lover?"

Shizuo spoke in a low tone of voice.

Shinra looked like he wanted to express his incredulity, but Celty shut him up with her hand despite trembling with her shadows herself.

The look on Kasuka's face was even more blank than usual.

"â€|.Hmm. I see. So basically it's a group of stalkers but there's a main guy and he's the mastermindâ€|.got it. So I just have to kill that guy. Any idea where he is?"

"â€|.Huh? Tomorrow? â€|.Oi, why the hell do I have to wait until TOMORROW! "

The voice on the other end spoke, and Shizuo's eyes narrowed behind his sunglasses.

"â€|.This isn't a trick of yours, is it? You aren't going to use me for some shitty planâ€|are you?"

"â€|Trust you? Why would I â€""

The voice said something again, and Shizuo began to look slightly embarrassed.

"â€|.Shit, don't pull that same card! â€|.Ahh fine, guess I have no choice. You better be available tomorrow you hearâ€|.."

Shizuo paused as he listened to the voice on the other side of the phone, before his expression relaxed with a smile.

"Yeah. Yeah, I'll come over with ootoro once everything is done.."

"Thanks Izaya. See you."

Shizuo said and hung up the phone, then turned to the people around him.

"Right, so I'm gonna kill that stalker tomorrow, Izaya's gonna give me his location...eh...what was his name again...adami? No, that's not right!"

Shizuo put his chin on his hand, before he noticed the silence that surrounded him.

"What is it?"

Shizuo's words sprung Shinra from his seat as he shook Shizuo vigorously by the shoulders, forgetting all concept of personal space for the man in a bartender suit for the action was definitely not in the 'safe zone'.

"WHAT DO YOU MEAN 'WHAT IS IT'?! Rather, we should be asking 'What was that'!" S-Since when did you and I-Izaya...!"

"Ah...you and Izaya...Shizuo and Izaya...that's just not right!"

Shizuo's surprise turned to annoyance when Shinra clutched his shoulders and got near to his face.

"Shizuo? Shizuo? You're Heiwajima Shizuo right? Can you crush my arm?" owwwww! OWOWOWOWOWWWW O-OKAY I GIVEEEEEEE."

"Calm down, brother."

Kasuka managed to say and Shizuo released Shinra, who was whimpering as he slid down to the floor, clutching his arm that had very nearly been broken.

Celty had the fleeting thought that it was like a beautiful maiden taming a wild beast as she rushed to Shinra's aid -

Which, with the situation, brought the image of a black haired man with a unnecessarily beautiful face and Celty outwardly shuddered before she managed to type -

[Are you alright, Shinra?!]

"A-Ah somehow...but my mental state is definitely not alright! Shizuo and Izaya, Celty! Shizuo and Izaya! What? When? How?!"

"A-And why?! Since how long, and why do I only know this nowwww?! That definitely wasn't the response I expected when I suggested to Shizuo to ask Izaya -! Why Shizuoooooo...whyyyyy didn't you let your childhood friend knowwww..."

Shinra whined and began rocking back and forth on the ground as Celty knelt next to him.

"Why do I have to tell you." Shizuo scoffed at him.

"Why, he says! Why? Why!? He says to the guy who has been trying to get him and Izaya to get along for years, when in fact they have been lovers!"

"T-That's right!" Shinra pointed with a frown on his face at Shizuo. "Lover! Shizuo has a lover! That guy who shows no interest in women finally has a lover, and it's a man! Not only that, it's Izaya, the guy he hates the most! Gahhhhhâ€|. I think I'm going to get an aneurysmâ€|..!"

"What, you have a problem?"

"Yeah, I have a problem! I definitely have a problem! With you not telling me you and Izaya are lovers! How long has this been going on?! Don't tell me â€" years?! Have you been lying â€""

"While brother is able to act, he is not a liar. It is most likely acquiring a lover happened most recently. Isn't that right, brother?"

"Yeah. You're right, Kasuka."

Shizuo crossed his arms with a nod as if he was recalling such.

"Lâ€|. Lover?" Anri whispered with a blush on her face.

Shizuo blinked as if he had forgotten about her until that moment. He raised a hand to the back of his head.

"â€|. Uhâ€|. that isâ€|..you and Ryuugamine can go slow. No rushâ€|..take your timeâ€|. I only recently acquired a lover too, so you kids can waitâ€|. yeah."

Shizuo nodded with an encouraging smile, and blinked when Anri gasped and moved back, Dokusonmaru almost falling off her at the sudden movement and letting out an indignant 'Meow!'.

"P-Please don't tease me like that! R-Ryuugamine-kun and I aren'tâ€|..!"

Anri said and blushed a deeper red, and Shizuo tilted his head, then turned to Celty.

"â€|. Was I not supposed to say that?"

Celty just hung her neck at the blond man's lack of social awareness as she typed up her reply.

[No, actually. But more importantly, since when did you and Izayaâ€|?]

She shuddered at the mere thought, and it was only Shizuo's open expression which held her back from expressing her disgust â€" as she was reminded of Karisawa Erika's fantasies about Shizuo and Izaya as lovers.

"Yes. Why did you not tell us, brother?"

"â€|. Is it the sort of thing you tell to people? I thought having a

lover was something private. I mean except between you and me Kasuka, since we're family."

Shizuo spoke, then stared as if his own words had made him realize something.

"...Ahhh that's right, I forgot to tell you. Sorry. Ahhh...you've let me know you've gotten a lover, and I didn't let you know I got one too...sorry Kasuka."

He said apologetically to his brother, who said with an expressionless face, "It's alright, brother. When did you acquire Orihara Izaya as your lover?"

Anri tensed at the name as if just realizing who exactly Shizuo's lover was, and Ruri looked at her in concern.

"Are you alright?"

"Ah yes..."

"When...it's hard to say. We had our first date a month ago"

"A MONTH?!"

Shinra exclaimed as Celty jolted in shock, as Shizuo continued speaking, "yeah it was about a month. We started dating in June. But we weren't lovers then, so the exact time is hard to say."

"I guess we got closer with more dates, and eventually we became lovers. Somehow, I fell for him, and it just happened."

Shizuo said with a sheepish smile on his face as he chuckled slightly, "Sorry, that doesn't really say anything, does it? I can't pinpoint the exact moment though. But Izaya confessed, I asked him out and then we began dating, just like that."

"I see. How far have you gone?"

"Uh, we've kissed and..."

"Stop stop stop! There's a kid here, Shizuo! Anri-chan is here!"

Kasuka and Shizuo turned and blinked simultaneously at the girl.

"Ahhh...yeah this isn't stuff for kids to hear..."

"My apologies."

Kasuka said and Anri replied, "It's quite alright..."

"You are happy with him, brother?"

Kasuka asked, and Shizuo responded as honestly as he could.

"He still pisses me off...but when he's not doing so, yeah. I am happy to have a lover."

"Is that so. Except for your childhood love, brother has never shown any interest in women. I didn't think it was because you preferred men, but I am glad that brother has a lover he's happy with. Congratulations, brother."

"...Yeah. Congratulations to you too, Kasuka."

The two brothers exchanged fond looks, one with a genuine smile on his face and the other with a curve of his lips. They expressed their happiness for each other in different ways, but one could tell they were close.

"So...you like men?"

Ruri asked hesitantly as Kasuka laid a hand on her shoulder, as if treasuring her presence at that moment.

"Not really. Izaya's just an exception."

"I was never really taken by any woman either before I met you, Ruri-san."

"Y-Yuuhei-san..."

Ruri flushed, but a smile was on her face as she turned to Shizuo.

"I'm sorry...I was just surprised. I didn't mean anything by it. I mean...if someone could love a monster like me, I'm sure a man could be loved by another man too."

Ruri said with her innocent sincerity, and Shizuo furrowed his eyebrows at her.

"...What do you mean a monster like you?"

Ruri flinched, and Kasuka gave her shoulder a gentle squeeze as he lied with a straight face:

"When Ruri-san has to put makeup to transform people into monsters, she does it very well. It's very believable. Because of that, some people have come to fear..."

"It's alright, Yuuhei-san."

Ruri interrupted unexpectedly, and Kasuka gave her a look.

"...Are you sure, Ruri-san?"

"...Yes."

"Why the change of mind?"

"Because he is your brother...I don't want to trouble you to keep secrets from the brother Yuuhei-san cares about. I...never really had a family but I think it's important to trust each other...And now that Yuuhei-san's brother told him honestly about having a male lover...I think Yuuhei-san should be honest with him about me as well..."

"S-Sinceâ€|..I 'm Yuuhei-san'sâ€|..lover."

"â€|.Alright."

Kasuka said with his usual emotionless expression, but Ruri's eyes widened as he patted her cheek gently.

"Do your best."

Shinra was standing on his own two feet once again with Celty beside him, but even he could sense the seriousness of the situation when Ruri turned towards Shizuo, meeting his straightforward gaze.

"Actually, Iâ€|I'm the killing monster, Hollywood."

â€|

Current time

â€|

"Is something the matter, Yuuhei-san?"

The man known as Hanejima Yuuhei blinked at his lover.

"â€|I was just thinking."

Kasuka said. He and Ruri were in an unpopulated cafÃ© and they sat together in a secluded corner in order to not draw the attention of people and potential paparazzi.

"About your brother?"

Kasuka blinked, in surprise this time, and Ruri said, "Ah, it's justâ€|..Yuuhei-san seems to be thinking a lot about his brother these days."

Remembering what he had said a week ago, she inquired, "I'm not sure butâ€|..is it because Shizuo-san â€" it's the first time he has had a lover?"

"â€|Yes. It's the first time he's shown romantic interest in anyone, actually. Except for that woman during our childhood days, he's never shown any interest in women. Or men, for that matter."

"That's why I'm surprised. That brother got a lover. It's not as if brother lacks interest in women â€" his interest is in older women. But interest doesn't translate to action. There's something that's been holding him back, and his lover â€"Orihara Izaya managed to get him to overcome that."

In a way I couldn't

Kasuka was not an intrusive person for he respected people's privacy, but he briefly wondered if he should have been a little more intrusive with his brother if it could have helped him overcome his insecurity.

"But, I suppose it makes sense. It is the guy who held his attention for years."

Kasuka spoke his thoughts out loud.

"â€|..Even if he's a man?"

Ruri said quietly. Kasuka looked at his lover.

"Homosexuality is looked down upon in Japan."

"â€| "

"For brother, it's not a matter of that. It's a matter of being able to be with someone who doesn't fear him. But that isn't what society thinks anyway."

Kasuka turned away slightly, and only one who knew him well would be able to detect the disturbance in his expression.

"It would probably be better to find a woman, but it's brother's choice."

And then, as if to convince himself, he said:

"â€|After all, brother has always wanted to fit in and be normal. So if he's giving up the normal Japanese life and wife and kids for another man, he must really be in love."

"Brother has never had a lover. He's never even been on a date with a girl. To become lovers in a mere monthâ€|Orihara Izaya must be really important to him."

"His first loverâ€|..at the age of 24."

"â€|.His very firstâ€|?"

It was all Ruri could say.

"Yes. Like I said, he's never been on a date with a woman, not even in high school. Kids his age were afraid of him, and he became a delinquent in middle and high school. Heâ€|..probably has been watching relationships from afar for a long time, with the knowledge that he wouldn't ever be able to have one."

"Because people are afraid of him and shun him, he's never even been able to believe he's just human."

"â€|That'sâ€|."

"Not only that. Brother may have a short temper and a violent nature, but he's a caring person. In order to not hurt others, he isolated himself from people."

"â€|.Shizuo-san is really a kind person, isn't he?" Ruri smiled.

"â€|But that'sâ€|.really sad. That kind of lonelinessâ€|"

"Have you ever felt it before, Ruri-san?"

"No, I don't think so." Ruri replied honestly.

"I mean, I wanted to throw away my humanity and become a monster... but since no one knew..."

She trailed off, and Kasuka agreed. "Me too. I chose to become an actor because of my brother's unconstrained emotions which I watched while growing up and most likely I missed a lot of important things a person should have."

"However, my feelings were from observation and self-doubt. I was never shunned from society like brother was, I was considered, generally speaking, a 'normal' human."

"Because I never experienced what brother has, I feel my advice could be lacking. Unless I am to experience what brother has just like I do for the characters I play, I will never be able connect with the emotions brother must feel at isolation from society."

"...That is why I never said anything. I feel any attempt to comfort brother would be insincere on my part."

Kasuka said these words not from self-justification, but from reflection of his own feelings at the situation.

"It's alright, Yuuhei-san," his lover comforted him. "I'm sure Shizuo-san understands."

"He probably does, but that does not erase my sense of guilt."

Kasuka said stonily, but Ruri just smiled at him fondly.

"If Yuuhei-san is feeling a sense of guilt, I am glad for him. After all, Yuuhei-san has always wanted to feel the emotions normal people feel. Isn't that what is happening now?"

Kasuka looked at her in genuine surprise.

"...I see. So this emotion is guilt."

He said, it was as if when he had said what he was feeling he had not even been aware of the feeling himself until his lover had pointed it out to him.

He smiled then, though it might not have been perceptible on his emotionless face..."

But he still smiled, because he felt 'glad'..."

For playing so many roles had enabled him to identify his specific emotion in a moment..."

And because he had come to realize this because of his lover, who listened to him when he thought no one would.

After all, he couldn't even listen to himself, for he didn't even know himself.

And yet she was listening to him.

"â€|. I am also glad, Ruri-san."

Kasuka said and leaned forward to place a kiss on Ruri's cheek with the emotion he couldn't express.

Ruri blushed but smiled back at Kasuka as she shyly met his lips.

I am glad you are here with me

The words were in their kiss

â€" And in the air between them when they parted.

If they had been normal people, they would have felt happiness.

He was a monster who wanted to become a human.

She was a human who had wanted to become a monster.

Neither of them really knew about themselves nor thought highly of themselves â€" therefore they were unable to properly care for themselves.

Thus they relied on the other who understood them to care for them.

It was also because of this that they could only feel gladness at the other being there for them â€"

They weren't happy like normal people would be.

- But gladness and a sense of contentment was enough for Kasuka and Ruri.

Such understanding between them was also why he could speak again, while knowing she was listening.

"Butâ€|. if perhaps when he's shunned â€" even then if there's someone who will stay by his sideâ€|.. perhaps it will be alright."

Return to conversation after a romantic moment might seem to be a mood ruiner to others, but it wasn't for the couple of Heiwajima Kasuka and Hijiribe Ruri.

For she knew expressing his feelings was something he found difficulty with, and just like how he had helped her find herself, she would help him find his feelings.

"After all, Orihara Izaya isn't exactly a man with morals himself. So he would be able to stand with the 'Monster of Ikebukuro'. In that way, Orihara makes a suitable romantic partner for him."

"â€| Yuuhei-san."

"What is it, Ruri-san?"

â€|

I've been selfish.

At that moment, Ruri realized.

I'm the killing monster Hollywood, but no one knows except for Yuuhei-san and the people who were there last time

No one has known for a long time what a monster I am

Even I myselfâ€|. I was happy when I was called a monster as a kid because I didn't know it was true

I was made an idol, and was able to live a mostly normal life

Yetâ€|Shizuo-sanâ€|.

Has been shunned all his life.

â€|..It's unfair, isn't it?

Yet, he could forgiveâ€|someone like me.

Ruri had a bitter smile on her lips, and Kasuka inquired, "What's wrong?"

"It's nothingâ€|."

Her lover's gaze pierced through her.

"My knowledge may be incorrect, but I believe a good relationship needs honesty."

"Ahhâ€|sorryâ€|." Ruri apologized. "I didn't meanâ€|.."

"If you don't want to tell, it's fine. However, I asked because I was concerned. Therefore, there's no need to apologize."

"Iâ€|feel guilty as well," Ruri confessed.

"It may be silly butâ€|..when I hear about Shizuo-san, Yuuhei-san's brother â€" I feel as if I was forgiven too easily. And that, I was being really selfish. I was scared of him instead of trying to understand him, when I was a monster myselfâ€|."

Ruri said as she smiled wryly, and Kasuka said emotionlessly, "It's not your fault."

"You were thinking of yourself, there's nothing wrong with that. After all, you told me you wanted to become a monster because you didn't think you deserved to be loved as a human. At that time, you were just starting to see and care for yourself as a human. It is not surprising to be selfish in that process."

"Yuuhei-sanâ€|.."

"Brother does not blame you either, because you were honest with him. Brother is an honest man, so he appreciates honesty. You have

confessed your sins, and you were forgiven. And that is that. There is no need to complicate the matter, in my opinion, just because you have gained new information about his circumstances. Brother would appreciate sympathy, but guilt would be counterproductive."

"Then you shouldn't feel guilty as well." Ruri couldn't help but say.

"...That is true."

Kasuka admitted with a blank face and Ruri laughed, a fond look in her eyes. She lowered her gaze.

"But, you're right. Whether being selfish was good or bad...it doesn't change the fact that he accepted and forgave me for my selfishness. That he told me it was alright."

As if recalling that particular moment, Ruri smiled and said as she met Kasuka's eyes "

"...You have a great brother, Yuuhei-san."

"

* * *

><p>"...</p>

Shizuo's mouth was open slightly in surprise.

"...Hollywood?"

"I'm very sorry for lying to you!"

Ruri was bowing in apology but Shizuo only looked confused.

"Wait...Hollywood, Hollywood..."

The blond man was still thinking when he should have been shocked, when he realized "

"Ah...serial killer Hollywood...that one?"

"Yes..."

"...Why?"

"Eh?"

"Why did you confess your true identity? It's surprising, but it's got nothing to do with me."

"...Well, except if you hurt Kasuka..."

Ruri almost flinched at the threatening look in brown eyes behind sunglasses.

"â€|. But I don't think you will, or you wouldn't have told me. So, why?"

Shizuo was frowning at her, and it took Kasuka's hand on her arm to gather her courage.

"Sorryâ€|um, do you remember that time you hit two people with a park benchâ€|?"

Shizuo's frown grew deeper. "Yeah I do. They pissed me off, so I hit them. Those filthy robbersâ€|."

The man in a bartender suit growled low under his breath as if he was thinking about the scene, and Ruri had to repress a flinch once more.

Her hands unclenched and clenched fabric between them, as Kasuka said, "Ruri-san."

Shizuo looked between them, and seemed to realize.

"â€|. You saying you're one of those people?"

Ruri inhaled, then met the monster of Ikebukuro's piercing gaze.

"Yesâ€|.. it was me."

"â€|."

Shizuo's expression was indecipherable, it was impossible for the occupants of the room to tell what he was thinking at that moment.

"I don't know who the other person was, but one of those people was me. The one wearing the mask of a monsterâ€|.."

"â€|. I see."

Ruri struggled to meet the blond man's impenetrable gaze, before he looked to his brother.

"You knew about this, Kasuka?"

"Yes. I was the one who found Ruri-san after you hit her with that park bench, brother."

"I see, I seeâ€|.."

Shizuo was speaking as if he was trying to figure out the situation on his own.

Then he said something that didn't make sense in the context of the situation at all.

"Well then, I'm glad."

"Eh?"

Ruri wasn't the only one surprised, as Shinra echoed to himself,

"Glad?"

He sounded like his brain had been jumbled up by Shizuo's unpredictable actions and words and he was trying to figure out where everything was.

But Shizuo didn't even hear him.

"Well you see...it's because I hit you with that bench that you got to meet Kasuka, right? That's why I'm happy."

Shizuo was speaking with a sheepish smile on his face as he looked at Kasuka and Ruri.

"I always thought I could only enact violence and hurt people with this strength of mine. But...to think it could cause good things to happen too, somehow it's really reassuring."

Shizuo spoke as he held his hand out, looking at it in something akin to pride for once.

H-He's not angry?

Ruri was shocked. She had half-expected to be thrown across the room with the table, regardless of the presence of the monster of Ikebukuro's brother.

Or even flung through the ceiling just like how she had been flung through the sky.

Does that mean...

I'm forgiven?

"Um...! Pardon me, but you're not mad? I just confessed to a crime...I don't think you should forgive me so easily!"

It took a lot of courage for Ruri to say the words, as her hands trembled in her lap but Shizuo only looked at her directly.

"...Hey, what's with that? What do you expect me to do?"

His hand landed on the table, and she couldn't suppress a flinch.

He had only curled his fingers, but there was already a crack.

"...throw this table at you? Well it's true that I get pissed off easily...but if there was logic I wouldn't get pissed even if I got shot or stabbed. I only lose it when things make no sense."

Shizuo said. He removed his hand from the table, leaning back in the chair again.

"And you're being honest with me. I appreciate that. Since you're making things make sense to me."

He looked at her, giving a wry smile.

"...You have your own reasons right? It's not my business, so I won't ask."

"Why do you say that?"

"Whyâ€|..experience I guess. I've met people who I thought were bad but turned out to have reasons of their own. My first kouhai, and also recently, my lover."

As Shizuo mentioned this a frown came onto his face, but he continued speaking calmly.

"Izaya is a worse person than you are, a complete bastard and shitty flea who screws with humans to see their reactions. But even he has reasons of his own. So yeah you pissed me offâ€|..but you're definitely not the worst."

"â€|.Even if I've killed people?"

Ruri spoke in a low voice, but Shizuo was undaunted.

"My kouhai â€" Varona has killed people too, but I don't think she's a bad person."

"â€|.."

"Besides, if Kasuka can trust you, so can I. â€|.Heh, his judgement is definitely better than mine. I get angry too easily, unlike my brother's cool headedness. So I trust him."

"Thanks, brother."

Kasuka finally spoke, and the gratitude he expressed was not only towards Shizuo's words.

Shizuo noticed this and gave his brother a smile, as Shinra decided to interrupt unnecessarily.

"Sorry to interrupt and trust between siblings is very well and good and all, but I think we're missing an important point here! Can we actually trust Izaya?!"

"â€|.Ahhhhh? Bastardâ€|..are you saying we can't trust my lover?!"

Shizuo turned his head and growled, despite him expressing a clear lack of trust in said lover before.

Shinra looked like he was still looking for the words to express.

He settled on whining instead of speaking like a mature adult.

"â€|.But it's Izaya! Izaya, Shizuo! _Izaya, Shizuo_! It's Izayaaaaaa, Shizuuoooâ€|Oriharaaaaaa
Izayaaaaâ€|.Izayaaaaâ€|Izaaaaayaaaaâ€|...!"

"OI, STOP SAYING MY LOVER'S NAME!"

Shizuo seemed to miss the point, looking like he was getting angry for a completely unrelated reason.

He seemed to have learned to hold his strength back as the table didn't break under his fist.

Shinra stopped short and stared at Shizuo.

"â€|.Oh god, you two really are lovers. Never ever would I have expected â€" ahhhhhhh Celtyyyyy!"

He flung himself onto his own lover, wailing in her arms.

"I think I'm scarred for lifeâ€|.! Izaya and Shizuo, Celty! Shizuo andâ€|.Iii -!"

Celty patted him on the back when he almost choked, though she still looked quite shaken herself.

[C-Calm downâ€|.it's no â€" well it is a big deal, but nothing to agonize aboutâ€|.]

"And they didn't tell me! They didn't tell me Celty, neither of my only two friends told me about the sudden blossoming of their romantic relationship even though I've been their only friend for yearsssss! They left me in the dark while going frolicking off in their new field of flowers instead of the destroyed field of Ikebukuro -!"

Instead of trying to comfort the downtrodden Shinra, Celty decided on a more practical approach.

[Why didn't you tell us, Shizuo?]

"I guess I forgotâ€|..well I did think of telling you, but I wasn't sure about it myself then. Sorry Celty. But, it's only been a monthâ€|..."

[No, there's no need to apologize. It's just, as your friends, we would have liked to know. Right, Shinra?]

"I seeâ€|..."

Shizuo said as if he hadn't known before as Shinra reluctantly left Celty's shoulder.

"â€|I got it. So should I tell you everytime Izaya and I go on a date?"

Celty flinched, then typed rapidly before Shizuo could get the wrong idea.

[N-No, not at all! You don't need to do that for the detailsâ€|.it's just, we would have liked to know our friend finally found himself a lover, who's also someone we knowâ€|...]

"Ah, so that's it."

Shizuo seemed to understand at this point, nodding to himself as Shinra sniffed.

"â€|.Oi, Shinra."

"â€|. ."

Shizuo sighed, then said as he looked at his childhood friend.

"â€|. Myâ€|..bad. So, Izaya and I are together nowâ€|. you got a problem with that?"

He said in his usual way but didn't sound as aggressive as he usually did with the bespectacled man who had been one of his only companions from young.

"N-Not at allâ€|..Shizuo."

"â€|. That's good then."

Shizuo said as he turned away with a satisfied look.

'Does that mean he actually cares about my opinion' â€" was all over Shinra's face.

"Ehâ€|. Shizuo?"

"What?"

"It is good." Shizuo blinked at Shinra in surprise.

"â€| It's good that you and Izaya have finally managed to resolve your differences. I'm glad."

Shinra said with a smile on his face as he looked straight at Shizuo.

"Ahhhâ€| ."

Shizuo looked like he wasn't sure how to respond, as Shinra continued cheerfully, seemingly back to his usual nature â€"

"I mean, even though it's disturbing to think about it's way better than me having to intervene everytime you two get into a fight just by meeting each other â€" or worse, Celty! Now that you two are together, I can spend more time with Celty when she doesn't have to go break up your fights like that time at the shrine on New Year's! How could you two even get into a fight at a shrine of all places anyway? Don't you have any humble respect for the gods at all?!"

"Ahhh? Tch! That flea pissed me off first!"

"Ah yeah that â€" so, doesn't Izaya piss you off anymore?"

"What are you talking about, of course he does."

"Even though he's your lover?"

"Doesn't make a difference."

Shizuo scoffed and Shinra said, "So if Izaya still pisses you offâ€|. why is he your lover?!"

"Because I decided he was to be my lover."

Shizuo said bluntly, and Shinra smiled, "And why did you decide that?"

"Why else? Because I wanted Izaya to be my lover."

"And what made you desire Izaya as your lover, when you two have been enemies for so long?"

"What is this, an interview?" Shizuo said dryly, but answered anyway.

"Because he confessed to me."

Shinra looked like he was just starting to understand, but before he could say anything a female voice spoke.

"Sorry for interrupting, but Shizuo-san, I want to say something to you!"

"Hm? What is it Ruri? Eh, calling you 'Ruri' is fine right?"

"Ah yes it's fine!"

Ruri said and even seemed a little glad at being called so informally.

"Thank you!"

She said what she had wanted to say, and Shizuo blinked at her as she smiled at him.

"And um, please tell your lover thank you on my behalf! I'm very grateful, that the incident can be resolved so the stalker won't attack anyone close to me. I'm very grateful to both him and you."

Ruri said and clutched onto Kasuka's sleeve as she did so, a brilliant smile on her beautiful face.

".Thank you so much!"

The man in a bartender suit tilted his head at her, before he leaned back.

".You're a kind person, aren't you?"

Shizuo said while giving off a smile of kindness himself.

She looked surprised.

He gave a laugh, and jerked his thumb towards himself with a grin.

"Yeah, leave it all to me."

"

"

* * *

><p>An hour ago, outside Shinra and Celty's apartment

â€|

[You're serious about Shizuo, right?]

"Seriously?"

[Sorry. I didn't mean to doubt you.]

Celty apologized automatically at Izaya's disbelieving look.

While she still didn't entirely trust Izaya, she was willing to try if Shizuo could trust him.

The expression Izaya had given her as if he was caught off guard made her feel slightly guilty for asking the question out of nowhere, when she was supposed to be seeing him out and he hadn't made any taunting comments.

"You just wanted to confirm?"

Izaya looked bemused.

When Celty didn't deny it, he slid his hands into his pockets with a smile.

"Yes. I am serious about Shizuo."

[I seeâ€|...]

Celty said once she had gotten over her surprise.

[Somehow, you've becomeâ€|...more honest.]

"Since honesty got Shizu-chan to ask me out, I thought it could provide me more advantages in the future."

Izaya smiled sheepishly. Then he laughed to himself, a fond look on his face.

"Seriously, the whole thing felt like a dream. But I went to Ikebukuro for our date anyway, and lo and behold there Shizu-chan was, not in his bartender suit for once. It's a good thing I did change my attire as well, or we probably wouldn't be together now. I'd have been booted out with, "Didn't I tell you not to come to Ikebukuro!" â€|With Shizu-chan totally forgetting I'm here for our date."

Izaya said, a smile on his face as he raised his gaze to the sky.

"Funny, isn't it? It was just a small thing, but it changed the course of events and our relationship to such a great extent. It's like the butterfly effect."

He seemed to be reminiscing as he said his next words "If he hadn't seen me that day..."

"If he hadn't seen me that day..."

Celty let a moment of silence pass, leaving Izaya to his own thoughts.

"Everything really has changed."

Izaya murmured with a smile with an emotion only he would know.

Celty took the moment to convey to him.

[It changed others' relationship too.]

"Really."

[Yeah. Because of that Ruri-chan was able to confess to Shizuo.]

"Confess to Shizu-chan?"

[Not like that! Sorry, that was a rather misleading statement. I mean, she was able to confess to Shizuo that she's Hollywood and that someone he hit with a park bench.]

"Ah, is that so."

Izaya said, his expression relaxed once again as he smirked.

"Hey Celty."

[What is it?]

"Do you think Shizuo is serious about me? Honestly."

"..."

"No need to hold back your thoughts," Izaya said with a wry smile on his face.

"I won't be hurt. Let me know your honest opinion, Headless Rider. There's no need to treat me differently now that I'm your friend's lover. It creeps me out."

This esper...

Celty thought in exasperation as her shoulders slumped. She gathered her thoughts for a moment before showing them to Izaya.

[Honestly, I can't give a solid answer. Shizuo and I haven't been talking that much lately, I suppose he's been busy with you. I only knew he was going out with you a week ago.]

"I see. So he's..."

[No, that doesn't really provide any justification as to whether Shizuo is serious about you.]

Celty interrupted Izaya, much to his surprise.

[So if I had to say "yes. I do think Shizuo is serious about you. He didn't tell anyone until we asked, like he wanted to work things out on his own. He told Ruri that it's because of you that he learnt that bad people could be forgiven. He seemed to be thinking of his relationship with you.]

"â€| "

[And "it's Shizuo. If he wasn't serious about you, he wouldn't be together with you, right? Shizuo's an honest guy, unlike you. When he says you're his lover, we know he's serious considering how you're his first lover. Unlike when you say you're Shizuo's lover.]

[But now that I've heard from you, well I'm reassured. Such insecurity is unlike you, so you really are serious about Shizuoâ€|if he can affect someone like you.]

"â€|.Haha. Am I that transparent now?"

Izaya finally said, but he couldn't keep the gladness out of his expression.

[Yes, and I must say I prefer it much more than the bastard you were.]

"So I'm not a bastard anymore?"

[You're much less of a bastard now.]

Izaya only chuckled good naturedly, and at that moment Celty felt as if she could get along with him.

Izaya seemed extremely pleased. She never thought he could have that sort of look on his face if it didn't involve his twisted plans for his humans.

"Ahhh yesâ€|..this is much better than your feigned politeness. Offering to show the guy you dislike out just because he's your friend's loverâ€|.or did you see it as an opportunity to corner me with questions?"

Izaya smiled, but it was not a malicious smile. There was no taunting tone in his words.

He turned and walked away, calling over his shoulder.

"Well thanks for your input, Celty. As usual I'll see you around."

She watched him go, as she thought to herself.

Orihara Izaya is actually a good guy now.

Wonders in Ikebukuro will never cease.

â€|

The Headless Rider shook her neck, before turning to wait for the man

in a bartender suit to emerge.

The sunset that filled her vision would have made her smile if she had a face.

As it was, her head was still with the man who had left, and so she smiled in her heart.

_This cityâ€|. . .

_It really has become peaceful. . .

She thought of why, and the notion of Shizuo and Izaya as a couple made her think to how Shinra had wanted them to get along â€"

And her own relationship with the human whom she was in love with, causing a peaceful feeling to fill her heart.

_Isn't that rightâ€|Shinra? . . .

End
file.